

Message Text

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ORIGIN SS-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /011 R

66616

DRAFTED BY EUR/RPM:GCHRISTIANSON

APPROVED BY EUR/RPM:GBHELMAN

EUR:JROUSE

S/S-O:ASHANKLE

----- 007395

R 142342Z APR 75

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USMISSION NATO

S E C R E T STATE 081545

EXDIS

FOLLOWING REPEAT STATE 81545 ACTION BONN LONDON INFO MBFR

VIENNA USCINCEUR USNMR SHAPE DATED 10 APR 75

QUOTE

S E C R E T STATE 081545

EXDIS - MILITARY ADDRESSEES HANDLE AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, NATO

SUBJECT: MBFR: BRITISH AND GERMAN THOUGHTS ON OPTION III

REF: A. LONDON 4802 B. BONN 5313 C. MBFR VIENNA 143

1. WE APPRECIATE CONTINUING THOUGHT WHICH TICKELL AND RUTH
ARE GIVING OPTION III ISSUES. WE ARE TAKING FRG AND UK
VIEWS AS EXPRESSED IN THE TRILATERALS INTO ACCOUNT IN OUR
FURTHER PREPARATIONS HERE. ALL ELEMENTS OF RUTH AND TICKELL
SUGGESTIONS WERE RAISED AT TRILATERALS, AND US VIEWS WERE
EXPRESSED THEN. THE REVISED "US VIEWS" PAPER WILL COVER
POINTS RAISED BY RUTH AND TICKELL IN REFTELS A AND B.

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EMBASSIES BONN AND LONDON MAY, HOWEVER, DRAW ON POINTS

BELLOW, AS APPROPRIATE, TO RESPOND TO SUGGESTIONS THAT TANK COMPONENT BE DELETED OR MADE MORE AMBIGUOUS AS AN ALLIED PHASE I OBJECTIVE.

2. RECENT US REVIEW OF MBFR CONCLUDED THAT IT WAS IMPORTANT TO MAINTAIN THE ALLIED OBJECTIVE OF REDUCING THE DISPARITY IN GROUND FORCES AND ACHIEVING A MILITARILY SIGNIFICANT OUTCOME FOR MBFR. IN OUR VIEW, BOTH OF THESE OBJECTIVES WOULD BE MATERIALLY ADVANCED BY THE REDUCTION OF SOVIET TANKS. THE ALLIED PROPOSAL FOR A REDUCTION OF 1700 TANKS IS ALREADY ON THE NEGOTIATING TABLE. OPTION III WAS DESIGNED AS AN ENRICHMENT OF THE CURRENT ALLIED

NEGOTIATING POSITION TO ACHIEVE ALLIED PHASE I REDUCTION GOALS -- THE TANK ARMY AND THE COMMON CEILING. FOCUSING ONLY ON SOVIET FORCE UNITS OR MANPOWER (AND THEREBY IN EFFECT DROPPING AN EXPLICIT ALLIED DEMAND FOR TANKS) IS A SIGNIFICANT CONCESSION WHICH WOULD NOT BE DESIRABLE. MUCH OF THE MILITARY, PSYCHOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL BENEFIT OF THE PROPOSED PHASE I REDUCTIONS COMES FROM WITHDRAWAL OF THE TANKS. TO RELINQUISH THIS OBJECTIVE WOULD DECREASE THE MILITARY AND POLITICAL BENEFITS OF AN MBFR AGREEMENT.

3. FURTHERMORE, THE EMERGING EASTERN INTEREST IN REDUCING THREATENING ELEMENTS (E.G., MBFR VIENNA 128) SUGGESTS A TACTICAL IMPORTANCE IN MAINTAINING THE TANK COMPONENT.

4. ASKING FOR THE WITHDRAWAL OF SOVIET TANK UNITS RATHER THAN SPECIFYING THE REDUCTION OF TANKS WOULD NOT NECESSARILY PREVENT THE SOVIETS FROM DEMANDING CONSTRAINTS ON ALLIED TANKS. IN FACT, THEY MAY BE ESPECIALLY LIKELY TO DO SO IF WE ASKED FOR SPECIFIC CONSTRAINTS ON SOVIET NUCLEAR SYSTEMS, AS TICKELL SUGGESTS. EMPHASIS ON UNITS COULD ALSO INVITE BROADER DEMANDS FOR EQUIPMENT CONSTRAINTS, E.G., THE WITHDRAWAL OF SPECIFIED US TANK UNITS WITH ALL THEIR EQUIPMENT.

5. THE PROPOSAL TO DEFINE SOVIET REDUCTIONS SOLELY IN TERMS OF MANPOWER FROM SPECIFIED UNITS (WITH ONLY PRESUMED TANK REDUCTIONS) COULD PUT THE ALLIES IN AN AWKWARD

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NEGOTIATING POSITION. WE WOULD BE ARGUING THAT ONLY THE WEST HAD TO REDUCE ARMAMENTS (OPTION III ELEMENTS) -- AN ASYMMETRICAL REDUCTION WE DO NOT INTEND. BEYOND THAT, AS NOTED IN PARA. 7, REFTEL C, THE TICKELL APPROACH COULD BE TACTICALLY DISADVANTAGEOUS IN THAT IT COULD OPEN THE WAY FOR AN EASTERN COUNTERPROPOSAL TO LIMIT A FIRST REDUCTION AGREEMENT TO MANPOWER ONLY, WITH SMALL REDUCTIONS ON AN EQUAL PERCENTAGE OR EQUAL NUMBER BASIS.

6. THE RESULTS OF FURTHER US THINKING ON CEILINGS ISSUES
WILL BE CONTAINED IN THE FINAL VERSION OF THE "US VIEWS"
LAPER, AS DISCUSSED IN THE TRILATERAL CONSULTATIONS. KISSINGER
UNQUOTE
KISSINGER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TROOP DEPLOYMENT, MUTUAL FORCE REDUCTIONS, NEGOTIATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 14 APR 1975
Decapton Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decapton Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975STATE081545
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: GCHRISTIANSON
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750125-0263
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750462/aaaacfaj.tel
Line Count: 121
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 75 LONDON 4802, 75 BONN 5313, 75 MBFR VIENNA 143
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 08 APR 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <08 APR 2003 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <16 SEP 2003 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MBFR: BRITISH AND GERMAN THOUGHTS ON OPTION III
TAGS: PARM, NATO
To: BONN LONDON
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006